

## **REMARKS**

Upon entry of the present Preliminary Amendment-A the claims in the application remain claims 1-26, of which claims 1, 14 and 20 are independent.

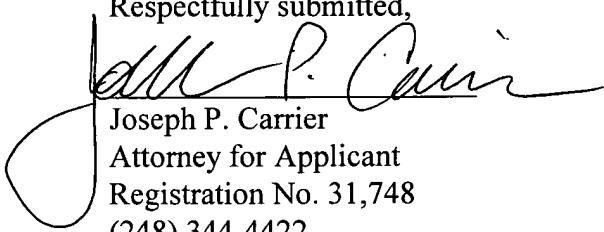
Claims 2, 15 and 21 have been changed from independent claims to dependent claims respectively depending from claims 1, 14 and 20. Also, all multiple dependencies (including improper multiple dependencies) are removed from the claims.

Applicant respectfully submits that all of the above amendments are fully supported by the original application. Applicant also respectfully submits that the above amendments do not introduce any new matter into the application.

Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

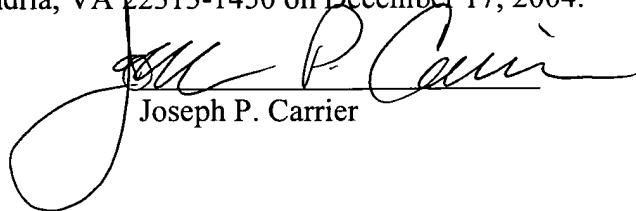
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## CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as Express Mail Certificate No. ED150632498US in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop PCT, Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on December 17, 2004.

  
Joseph P. Carrier